What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method to facilitate suspending threads in a platform-independent virtual machine implemented on an operating system that lacks a global mechanism for suspending threads, comprising:

executing a thread requiring other threads to be suspended;

changing a scheduling policy for the thread; and

raising a priority of the thread to a highest available priority, whereby changing the scheduling policy and raising the priority of the thread causes the thread to run to completion while other threads do not run.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

upon completion of the thread,

reducing the priority of the thread to an assigned priority; and

returning the scheduling policy of the thread to an assigned scheduling policy.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the thread requiring other threads to be suspended includes a garbage collection thread.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein changing the scheduling policy for the thread includes changing the scheduling policy from round-robin to first-in, first-out.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the operating system that lacks the global mechanism for suspending threads includes POSIX.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the platform-independent virtual machine includes a JAVA VIRTUAL MACHINE™.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising performing a garbage collection with the thread.

8. A computer-readable storage medium storing instructions that when executed by a computer cause the computer to perform a method to facilitate suspending threads in a platform-independent virtual machine implemented on an operating system that lacks a global mechanism for suspending threads, the method comprising:

executing a thread requiring other threads to be suspended;

changing a scheduling policy for the thread; and

raising a priority of the thread to a highest available priority, whereby changing the scheduling policy and raising the priority of the thread causes the thread to run to completion while other threads do not run.

9. The computer-readable storage medium of claim 8, the method further comprising:

upon completion of the thread,

reducing the priority of the thread to an assigned priority; and

returning the scheduling policy of the thread to an assigned scheduling policy.

10. The computer-readable storage medium of claim 8, wherein the thread requiring other threads to be suspended includes a garbage collection thread.

11. The computer-readable storage medium of claim 8, wherein changing the scheduling policy for the thread includes changing the scheduling policy from round-robin to first-in, first-out.

12. The computer-readable storage medium of claim 8, wherein the operating system that lacks the global mechanism for suspending threads includes POSIX.

13. The computer-readable storage medium of claim 8, wherein the platform-independent virtual machine includes a JAVA VIRTUAL MACHINE™.

14. The computer-readable storage medium of claim 8, the method further comprising performing a garbage collection with the thread.

15. An apparatus that facilitates suspending threads in a platform-independent virtual machine implemented on an operating system that lacks a global mechanism for suspending threads, comprising:

an executing mechanism that is configured to execute a thread requiring other threads to be suspended;

a changing mechanism that is configured to change a scheduling policy for the thread; and

a priority raising mechanism that is configured to raise a priority of the thread to a highest available priority, whereby changing the scheduling policy and

raising the priority of the thread causes the thread to run to completion while other threads do not run.

16. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising:

a priority reducing mechanism that is configured to reduce the priority of the thread to an assigned priority; and

a returning mechanism that is configured to return the scheduling policy of the thread to an assigned scheduling policy.

17. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the thread requiring other threads to be suspended includes a garbage collection thread.

18. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein changing the scheduling policy for the thread includes changing the scheduling policy from round-robin to first-in, first-out.

19. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the operating system that lacks the global mechanism for suspending threads includes POSIX.

20. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the platform-independent virtual machine includes a JAVA VIRTUAL MACHINE™.

21. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising a garbage collection mechanism that is configured to perform a garbage collection with the thread.